

CONNECTIONS

Our purpose is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world



Message from the Pastor



UPCOMING EVENTS

August

Vacation Bible Study 8/3-8/5

Outdoor Service 8/22/21

There is a song that keeps floating into my consciousness. In fact, in the last week it has bubbled up through a devotional and memory. The piece I am speaking of is Elaine Hagenberg's *O Love*.

"O Love" was inspired by the words of Scottish minister, George Matheson in 1882. Blinded at the age of nineteen, his fiancé called off their engagement and his sister cared for him as he endured new challenges. Years later, on the eve of his sister's wedding, he faced the painful reminder of his own heartache and loss as he penned the words to this hymn.¹ Here is what Matheson wrote:

*O Love that will not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thy ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.*

*O Joy that seeks me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.*

Yes, this is a love song, but the words are from a wounded and hurting world to a God who never lets us go. In the composition that Hagenberg wrote, she incorporates

With Christ as our center, we are His extended family, compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people.
Our congregation is on a lifelong journey of discipleship to become more like Christ.

Prayers and Praise



PRAYER requests

In the Hospital

Please remember those in Continuing Care Facilities

Bobbie Winters
Superior Woods



Lila	Timm	1
Amy	Milios-Knieper	3
Abby	Fleming	6
Arlene	Bird	11
David	Murray	15
Betty	Shaw	15
Dennis	Jacobson	17
Doug	Cook	20
Raymond	Mitchell	21
Amy	Reeves	21
Pat	Taylor	21
Mary Jo	Zechiel	21
Kathy	Perkins	23
Sharon	Webster	24
Ron	Banks	27
Jerry	Caldwell	27
Harriet Anita	Dawson-Bucknor	27
Jim	Wilson	27

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

Stephanie Boltrick

Daughter of Nancy Boltrick

Christopher Stone

Son of Mike & Dawn Stone

Michael Stone

Son of Mike & Dawn Stone

Blake

Grandson of Betty Hughey

Jared Stabnau

Grandson of Elaine Stabnau

Cody Ford-Aimone

Grandson of Mike & Lynda Aimone

Justin Renton

Grandson of Donna Sweeney

Chad Koenne

Grandson of Dick & Lila Timm



Chris & Angelle	Whitt	4	Mike & Julie	Skelton	21
Brian & Nancy	Shephard	5	Wesley & Doris	Crocker	22
John & Deborah	Juriga	11	Robert & Eula	Nurnberger	22
Russ & Carol	Leake	13	Ryan & Elizabeth	Payne	23
Derek & Am	Reeves	19	Dick & Nancy	Carey	25
Ed & Kim	Paris	21	Mark & Jane	Cook	29

Message from the Pastor

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“hopeful ascending lines representing renewed faith. Though lingering dissonances remind us of past heartache, the beautiful promise remains: “morn shall tearless be.”

I am not sure why this particular song has reemerged in my life, but here are some guesses.

Perhaps it is because I needed to be reminded of God’s love for me. The divorce is final, and I am healing, but there are those brokenhearted moments that creep back in and sometimes make me feel I haven’t progressed at all in my grief. I had one of those moments just last weekend, and then this song reminded me, “morn shall tearless be.”

Perhaps it resurfaced so that I could share it with you. These past 16 months of not being able to worship together and now we can, but it still isn’t the same and it may never be, is to be understood as a deep grief for this faith community. On top of this time away from each other, we don’t really have a sense of who is still in the community. This is a new grief built on top of the old grief of losing friends and congregation members as BFUMC has been in a declining trend for awhile now. So, grief upon grief. In this song, it expresses at the same time how weary our souls are, and yet we continue to want to give back to God the life we owe. We want to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. We want to do unto others as we would have them do unto us and yet...the grief can paralyze us. If we don’t allow ourselves to grieve what was, what could have been, or recognize our current reality, where we are as a community of faith in this present moment, we get stuck in past thinking with what ifs and don’t you remember and this is the way it use to be and we’ve never done it that way before. It’s heartbreaking work to grieve such losses, but it is essential so that we experience the hopeful ascending lines representing renewed faith.

Perhaps, this is God’s promise to us in this moment of unknowing. We don’t know a lot. We don’t know if we will ever get back to normal. We don’t know if we have a full congregation to return to. We don’t know what will happen at General Conference and within our denomination. We don’t know what tomorrow holds with the Coronavirus or with any other life changing event that might happen in our lives. And all that unknowing can make us anxious and in need of control. And we allow that anxiety and need for control to take over us, we start not being our best selves and we can, without knowing it, hurt one another with our thoughtless words and careless deeds. This song tells us God will never let us go. No matter how far we try to get away from God’s love, it is still there just waiting with open arms for us to return.

So as you are closing out the summer, I pray that you have wonderful times with family and friends, that there will be more sunny days than rainy, and that you will all take time to grieve the losses both as individuals and as a faith community that we have incurred over the past years.

Let August’s moments of grief help us to realize that morn shall tearless be. Let us lean into “O Love” and know that God will never let us go.

Blessings through grieving,
Pastor Mary

To listen to this beautiful, haunting, and joyous song:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2cqbITDR8w&t=21s>



Updates from Ad Council

Friends –

I wanted to provide you with a few updates and reminders from Ad Council.

- **MASKS REQUIRED** - Please remember that masks continue to be required within our church building, including Sunday morning worship. We want to be sure we are a welcoming space for all, including our younger children who are not yet able to be vaccinated. In order to help protect everyone and keep our kids from feeling isolated, we will all continue to wear masks while indoors.
- **FALL WORSHIP** - Worship Committee is working hard and planning for a return to two services (9am and 10:30am) in the fall, starting Sunday, September 12. We are also looking at our online presence and what that will look like once we have returned to two services.
- **SAVE THE DATE** – We've previously discussed that we have some difficult conversations coming in our congregation related to some of the issues facing our larger United Methodist denomination. We are pleased that Bishop David Bard, bishop for the Michigan Conference, will be joining us to help facilitate our initial conversation. Bishop Bard will be at Belleville FUMC on Thursday, October 7 at 7pm. Please plan to join us for this important conversation. Please also pray for our congregation as we prepare for this conversation. (If you did not receive the letter and/or e-mail about these issues (sent late spring), please reach out to Abby or the church office for a copy.)
- **SAVE THE DATE** – Our annual charge conference, the meeting where we handle the business of the church, will be held on **Saturday, September 18 at 1:30pm**. Details will follow.
- **HELP NEEDED** – We are still in need of help in numerous areas including communications, audio-visual, committee members, children's programming, etc. If you find God calling you to serve in some additional way, please reach out and we can find the opportunity that is right for you. If you have a desire to help, we have needs!

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Abby Fleming



God Unbound (Series Continues) This series is based on Elaine Heath's book by the same name. We will explore how the church of Galatia (the book of Galatians) lived out their faith and how that early church is calling us to something more. (Continues – final two weeks)

August 1, 2021—Chapter 5 God Unbound

Scripture: Galatians 4:4-6

Title: Working Through Our Anxiety

Synopsis: Paul sees how the Galatians are swayed so easily by confusing voices, and he recognizes that the loudest voices come from inside the Galatians heads full of fear. How do we walk away from fear and into faith?

August 8, 2021—Chapter 6 &7 God Unbound

Scripture: Galatians 5:25-6:2

Title: God Unbound

Synopsis: Paul helps us to understand how we as a community of faith can have the tendency to bind God when our anxiety of change takes over. What human tendencies do we fall into and how do we over come so that our faith community can be known for God Unbound?

Three-week vacation for Pastor Mary

August 15, 2021 – David Fleming will preach

August 22, 2021—Jill Sestok will preach

Title: Open Wide Your Hearts

Scripture: II Corinthians 6: 1-13

August 29, 2021 – Michael Gross will preach



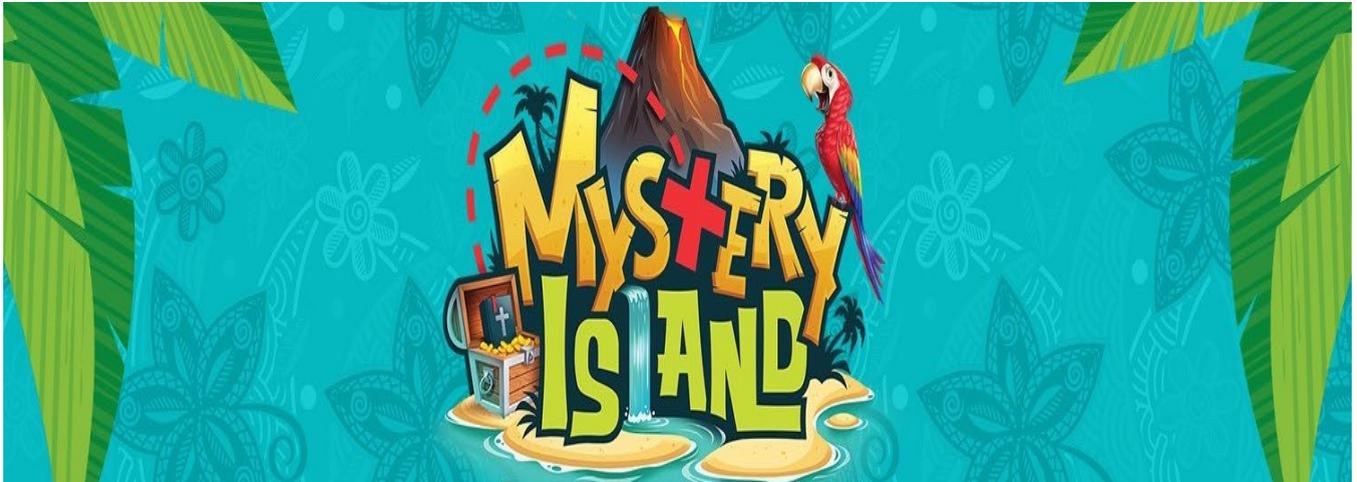
*Sunday, 8/22/21 @
10:00am*

outdoor
WORSHIP

**Come Join us!
More Details to Follow!**



VBS Begins Soon!!



If you want to have summer fun exploring God and uncovering the mystery of faith, look no further than diving in to discover how great, almighty, holy, saving, true, and trustworthy God is. We'll find God together!!! Bring a friend; there is no cost to attend!!! *Please note that all participants must be entering Kindergarten through 8th grade this coming September in order to be eligible. There is an opportunity to receive the VBS materials for an at home experience if that is the best path for you and yours as we also gather together on location for three evenings.

EVENT SUMMARY DETAILS:

DATES: Tuesday, August 3rd - Thursday, August 5th, 2021

TIME: Dinner 5 - 5:30 p.m. & Program 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Belleville First UMC @ 417 Charles Street, Belleville, MI 48111



Greetings Church,

We have weathered several storms and were still able to participate rain free for the Belleville Lake Fest at the end of June. It was such a blessing to be compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people there and especially to be offering up our Vacation Bible School ("VBS"/ Day Camp) experience. Our island themed VBS Day Camp will be offered August 3rd – 5th from 5 – 7:30 p.m. at church and our mission focus will be the BFUMC Emergency Food Pantry. It is really something to celebrate that we have nearly fifty people participating so far.

Summer Growth Groups will be a wrap as of August 14th, which have helped us to focus our spiritual walk through the BFUMC Spiritual Pathway. Next summer we won't have structured Growth Group gatherings, but a Summer Fellowship Fun tour will be offered to help us get out into the surrounding area together and share our faith journey wherever the opportunity might show up in our local community. So far, we're going to make sure we hang at the Lake Fest, offer a movie night again, take in some local live music offerings and eateries. If you have any ideas as to what the tour should include, please do let me know what local happenings you feel we just can't miss.

Looking forward, we are thinking about the fall program year kick off slated for Sunday, September 12th, which will be our Rally Day. This is the day when program offerings for the year will be officially shared in church. As the VBS Day Camp volunteer crews close out the first few weeks of August, I'll be looking the rest of the month for folks to step up and into the Spiritual Formation team for 2021 – 2022. The first focus will be children and youth Sunday School Growth Groups that will meet regularly on Sundays (except for the first Sunday of each month when we'll all have communion and worship together). Sunday, September 19th is already reserved for our traditional welcome back party for the children's Sunday School Growth Group. **LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP!!!**

With continued blessings and thanks,
Jill



Belleville Lakefest – Thank You!

The first Belleville Lakefest took place June 26th and 27th and Belleville First UMC was present and active, both on Main Street and in the Dragon Boat races. Thank you to all who designed, setup and worked in the booth on Main Street. We were able to showcase our Missions activities, publicize our VBS, pass out free water, offer some fun and games to the children attending the festival and, perhaps most important, interact with folks who normally don't know about our congregation. A great step out into the community.





Summer Mission Project – Cass Community Social Services



Missions is offering a chance to serve this month August 6th and 7th. A team will be going down to Cass Community Social Services in Detroit to help convert their new building into a family shelter with individual private residences. Our work will most likely be painting but other odd jobs may be assigned. You can sign up for either Friday, Saturday, or both days. We will meet at the church and carpool to the site in Detroit. We will need to leave to be there and ready to start work at 9am each day. We will pack up to leave at approximately 4pm each day.



If you are able to help, please sign up at the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/508094EA5AD2BA2FD0-work>

Or contact Dee Groeneweg at 734-635-1058



The Missions Committee also sponsored a boat in the community wide Lakefest Dragon Boat Races. Dragon boats are essentially large canoes (seating up to 20). We had a great crew of paddlers, some church members, some family, and some friends. In an awesome display of teamwork, our boat placed second out of eleven in the races, trailing the first place boat by only 1.6 seconds. A great time of fellowship, teamwork, and exercise. Also, a great metaphor for what can happen when everyone in the church is committed to achieving the same goal. More importantly, we raised about \$2000.00 for Cass Community Social Services through 'seat' sponsorships in this event. A huge thank you to everyone who paddled and contributed!



It was great to be out in the community, showing who we are and what we do. We look forward to more opportunities to demonstrate how Christ's followers can have a positive impact on Belleville and the surrounding communities.



New Ministry Opportunity: Hugs of Love

Do you knit, crochet, or quilt? Would you like to spend time with others who do? Would you like to offer your creations as gifts to those who are recovering from illness, have lost a loved one, or are new parents in the community? Would you love to pass on your craft to the next generation? Then imagine your creation being prayed over by the faith community at BFUMC prior to being offered as caring hugs to those in need.

In the midst of planning a ministry for those who are grieving, this idea of having a group make lap quilts, afghans, or crocheted throws for those in need bubbled up. This is a ministry for those within the BFUMC family but also for those the BFUMC family know and love who are in need. As the discussion deepened, the idea of offering either blankets or booties to new parents arose as well as this being an opportunity for a multi-generational gathering where veteran crafters mentored the next generation.

We are just starting this ministry, so right now we need to know who of the creatives out there would be interested in creating these gifts of love. If you would be interesting in the Hugs of Love team, please call the church office.

This ministry works during COVID because each creation is made by individuals. If you're not comfortable in person, you can still work on your creations at home and then deliver them to church. If you'd love to have the social interaction with others, the team could meet in the fellowship hall, socially distanced and masked.

Once the team is in place, we'll need the rest of BFUMC to offer names of those who could benefit from Hugs of Love. You can also call the church office to offer names of those in need. This would also be the time for those interested in learning how to knit, crochet or quilt to join in on the fun. Call the church office if you'd like to be mentored in Hugs of Love.

Finally, as the creations are finished, they will be prayed over on communion Sundays as the Hugs of Love become blanketed in prayer.

So don't wait, do not hesitate, call the church office (734-697-9288) or Yvonne Pierce (734-645-5800) today and become part of Hugs of Love.



Emergency Food Closet News

From January 1 through June 30, 2021, the Emergency Food Closet passed out 814 bags of food and had 35 new clients. The number of bags given out since May has been increasing weekly. Thank you to everyone who packs, distributes bags, shops, passes out brochures, and who donates food and/or personal care items or makes a monetary donation. Without your continued support, we could not continue to serve those in our community who are in need!

Marilyn Wood,
Emergency Food Closet Coordinator





Charge Conference



Saturday, September 18th

1:30pm



AUGUST

2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 10am Worship</p> <p><i>Panini Month</i></p> 	<p>2 10am Bagpipes (Bell)</p> <p><i>Foot Health Month</i></p> 	<p>3 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Ad Council (Z)</p>	<p>4 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle</p>	<p>5 10am Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S) 7pm Al-Amon (FH)</p>	<p>6 <i>Friendship Day</i></p> 	7
<p>8 10am Worship</p> <p>Growth Groups End</p> <p><i>Nat'l Smile Week</i></p> 	<p>9 10am Bagpipes (Bell)</p> <p><i>Book Lover's Day</i></p> 	<p>10 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)</p>	<p>11 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle</p>	<p>12 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S) 7pm Al-Amon (FH)</p>	<p>13 <i>Left Handers Day</i></p> 	14
<p>15 10am Worship</p>	<p>16 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 7pm Garden Club</p>	<p>17 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)</p>	<p>18 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle</p>	<p>19 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S) 7pm Al-Amon (FH)</p>	<p>20 6pm Lange/Bias Rehearsal (S)</p>	<p>21 3pm Lange/Bias Wedding (S)</p>
<p>22 10am Worship</p> <p><i>Be Kind to Humankind Week</i></p>	<p>23 10am Bagpipes (Bell)</p>	<p>24 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)</p>	<p>25 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle</p>	<p>26 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Amon (FH)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 8a-5p Pollard Wedding Horse & Carriage & Cars in Parking Lot</p>
<p>29 10am Worship</p>	<p>30 10am Bagpipes (Bell)</p>	<p>31 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)</p>				